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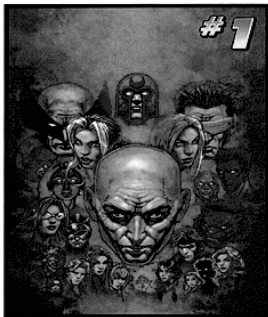


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\$2.99 US \$4.25 CAN

PREVIOUSLY EXCALIBUR

"FORGING THE SWORD"



PROFESSOR CHARLES XAVIER, founder of the mutant super hero team known as the X-MEN, has left the X-Men and his New York home for the island nation of GENOSHA following the death of his one-time friend and frequent enemy, MAGNETO. Once a prosperous, technologically advanced country populated almost entirely by mutants, Genosha was recently decimated—along with all 16 million mutants who called it home. Now, it is nothing but rubble and a few refugees who hide amongst its ruins.

Xavier finds that not everybody on Genosha is happy he's there—for instance, UNUS THE UNTOUCHABLE and his gang, who threaten him. But to his defense come two young mutants—WICKED and FREAKSHOW. Xavier learns he has both friends and enemies on Genosha.

When Xavier reaches his dwelling, he is greeted by his new housemate, a man the entire world believes to be dead...MAGNETO.



The man who recently destroyed much of New York City, it turns out, was *not* Magneto, but an imposter. The real Magneto has been hiding in Genosha since it was destroyed. He and Xavier have a hard time explaining this, however, when they're paid a visit by...CALLISTO, an old associate of the X-Men, who threatens to turn Magneto over to the authorities for the bounty.

To Magneto's rescue come Wicked and Freakshow...and after everyone has calmed down, the group assembled—adults Magneto, Xavier and Callisto, and teenagers Wicked and Freakshow—realize they have a common desire: to restore Genosha to its former glory.

Back in the hideout of Unus and his gang, a young mutant named HUB has infiltrated their group...for reasons not yet clear. She is contacted by a comrade, HACK, who tells her that Genosha has become the target of an OMEGA SENTINEL...a cybernetically-enhanced human that is programmed to annihilate all mutants!

GENOSHA.

ONCE UPON A TIME, HAMMER
BAY WAS CONSIDERED
AMONG THE LOVELIEST
CITIES IN THE WORLD.

IT CONSIDERED ITSELF THE
EMBODIMENT OF ALL THAT WAS
CUTTING EDGE AND NEW.

ITS CITIZENS LIKED TO BOAST THEY WERE
TOO BUSY BUILDING THE FUTURE TO
CONCERN THEMSELVES WITH THE PAST.

HERE WAS A LAND OF
HOPE AND GLORY.



AND
THEN...



...WITHOUT
ANY WARNINGS
AT ALL...



...WITHOUT
ANY MERCY...



...IT WAS
ALL TAKEN
AWAY!

WILD THINGS

Starline
Presents
E CALIBUR

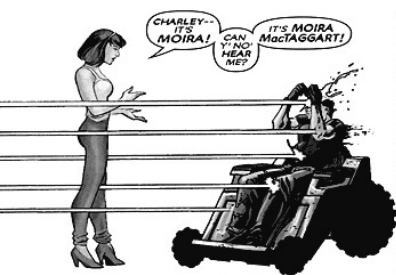
**Forging
the
Sword**

3 of 4

By **Chuck
Carson** and
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CHARLES--
OLD FRIEND--
ARE YOU ALL
RIGHT?

USE YUIR
EYES, CHARLEY.
USE YUIR
INTELLECT.

IF THIS
IS REAL, WHY
ISN'T MAGNETO
AFFECTED?



ERIK?

YES,
CHARLES?

YOU
SUDDENLY
SEEM VERY
UPSET. CAN
I HELP?



I--I'M
NOT
SURE...



THA'S
BETTER, ME OL'
DARLIN'.

BUT
I THINK
YOU
ALREADY
HAVE.



WHAT ARE
YOU LOOKING
AT?

DO YOU
SEE
ANYTHING
THERE?

ABSOLUTELY
NOTHING.



AN
OMEGA
SENTINEL
WAS
STANDING
ON THE
DECK.

IT--IT
KILLED
ME.



LATER...

I MUST HAVE
INADVERTENTLY
SYNCHED WITH
ANOTHER
TELEPATH...

...THE
SENTINEL'S
IMAGE CAME
FROM THAT
MIND.



IT WAS
SO PRIMAL.
SO POWERFUL.
SO...OVER-
WHELMING...

...MY OWN
MIND MADE
IT REAL.



I COULDN'T
FIGHT BACK.
I COULDN'T ESCAPE.
THE AGONY
WOULDN'T END.



I WAS PROMETHEUS
ON THE ROCK, BEING
FOREVER TORN TO PIECES
BY ZEUS'S EAGLES AND
REBORN, TO DIE AGAIN
AND AGAIN...



...AND
AGAIN.



AN ACCIDENT.
DO YOU THINK, OR
A DELIBERATE
ATTACK?

EITHER WAY,
WE GOTTA
FIGURE IT'S
SOMEBODY
WITH MAJOR
POWER.

YES, ONE
WOULD THINK SO.
CALLISTO.

CAN
YOU LOCK
IN ON IT,
CHARLES?

WHOEVER,
WHEREVER,
THEY'RE
GONE.



ALL THAT'S
LEFT IS
A PALPABLE
SENSE OF
DREAD.

I THINK
THIS
VISITATION
REPRESENTS
A VERY REAL
AND
IMMINENT
THREAT.



--WE'RE ALL DEAD!

ZZZ
ZAMP!



CHIMÈRE!

YOU'RE
WASTING
YOUR
BREATH,
SHE ISN'T
HERE.

THEN
WHY--?!



WE NEED
PURGE.



WHAT WE
NEED IS
CHIMÈRE.

THERE
ISN'T
TIME!

I COULD
LOSE MY
LINK AT ANY
MOMENT!



WE DON'T GO NOW, WE'LL
NEVER GET ANOTHER
CHANCE.

DOWN
WIT' DAT,
GIRL.



YOU'RE
JUST
SPOILING
FOR A
FIGHT.

ALWAYS.

ZZAMP!

OUTBOUND
FROM MUMBAI...

YO, HACK,
YOU SURE THIS IS
AN AIRPLANE?

ANTONOV-225
MYRIA, BIGGEST
CARGO-CARRIER IN
THE WORLD.

SHE'S
RUSSIAN,
LEADED FROM
AEROFLOT.

PICKED
THAT FROM
THE PILOTS
BRAINS
DIDJA?

THAT, BUT
NOT MUCH
MORE.

THEY'VE
DEALT WITH
TELEPATHS.
THE PLANE'S
FULL OF PSI-
SHIELDS.

SO LESSEE
WHAT THEY
GOT THAT'S SO
IMPORTANT.

CAN
YOU "HACK"
THEIR
HEADS?

NOT TOO
WELL, THEY'RE
BOTH IN DEEP
STASIS.

THE GUY'S
NAME IS
SHOLA.

OUTSTANDING

HE'S
GENOSHAN--
AND A
COMBAT
TELEKINE!

WHAT
ABOUT THE
BABE?

KARIMA
SHAPANDAR.

INDIAN
NATIONAL
POLICE

OMEGA
SENTINEL.











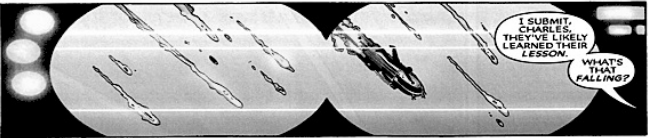






GENOSHA
IS RESTRICTED
AIRSPACE.

THEY'RE
NOT SUPPOSED
TO BE HERE.



I SUBMIT,
CHARLES.
THEY'VE LIKELY
LEARNED THEIR
LESSON.

WHAT'S
THAT
FALLING?



WHATEVER
IT IS, SOMEONE
CARES VERY
DEEPLY
ABOUT IT.

HMNH--
PSI-SHIELDS
ON THIS ONE.
I CAN'T GRAB
ANY OF HIS
THOUGHTS.



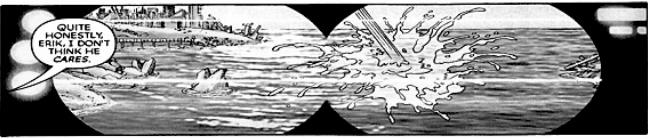
"THE
CANISTER'S
CERAMIC.
IMMUNE TO MY
MAGNETISM."

"THAT--IS
WORRISOME."



KLIK

"WHOEVER
THAT IS RIDING
IT, HE'S RUNNING
OUT OF SKY."



QUITE
HONESTLY,
ERIK, I DON'T
THINK HE
CARES.







WHAT'S THIS?

AIRPAKS.

ESSENTIALLY, ARTIFICIAL GILLS. AS FAR AS BREATHING IS CONCERNED, WE CAN STAY SUBMERGED INDEFINITELY.

WHY THE URGENCY?

THE MAN WE SAW IS DEAD. I FELT THAT HAPPEN ON IMPACT.

BUT I'M SENSING A WOMAN IN THAT CANISTER.



HER THOUGHTS ARE FRAGMENTED AND CHAOTIC...

...BUT SHE'S DEFINITELY ALIVE!



DR. PAVLOV, I REST MY CASE.

YOU'RE NOT COMING, CALLISTO?

I THINK I'M NEEDED MORE UP HERE.



I THINK YOU'RE RIGHT.

HE TRUSTS YOU, MAGS. HEAVEN KNOWS WHY.

DON'T MAKE EITHER OF US REGRET THAT.



EVEN AFTER ALL THAT'S HAPPENED, CALLISTO, HE REMAINS MY FRIEND.

FIVE MINUTES
AGO, BETWEEN
MAGNETO'S
HOUSE AND
THE HARBOR...

WOW!

DIDJA
SEE?

THAT
TOTALLY
ROCKS!

D'YOU THINK
SHE'D EVER
GIVE US A RIDE
LIKE THAT?

WHAT
WAS THEIR
HURRY,
WICKED?

SOONER WE CATCH UP,
SOONER WE ASK.

LOOK
OUT!

WHAT'S
HAPPENING?!

HOW
SHOULD I
KNOW?

WE'VE
GOTTA FIND
COVER!

BOOMPA!

SWAEP!



NEXT:
**Hard
RAIN!**

SWORD STROKES

Dear Sword Strokes:

Let me start by saying that I'm really excited to see EXCALIBUR back on the shelves once more. Seeing Chris Claremont writing this title again reminds me of way back when I first started reading comics, and reminds me why I still do. Aaron Lopresti's art is well suited to the air of this book. He does a great job of visually depicting the war torn landscapes of Genosha.

Seeing the "ghost" of Moira MacTaggart was a bit of a shock and, interestingly enough, leaves one to wonder about the state of Professor X's sanity. Plus, I'm glad to see that some of the locals aren't very happy to see the Prof either. As far as Wicked and Freakshow...it's really just too early to tell whether or not I'm going to like these characters at all.

However....

I can honestly say I'm soooooo severely annoyed by the ending! I realize that one does want an eye popper for an ending. Something unexpected....G'MON, PEOPLE! Chris, what are you doing? Magneto is alive!

HE WAS DECAPITATED! In front of all of New York, his head was quite clearly severed from the rest of his body. And I don't care how many magnetic fields he can create....he's dead. Please let him stay that way!

Dale J Yaddow
New Hartford, New York

Dale, allow us to direct your attention to a favorite Sherlock Holmes quotation of ours: "When you have ruled out the impossible, whatever remains, no matter how unlikely, must be the truth." Well, it's impossible that a guy who was decapitated could be alive. Therefore....

Well, by now you've read #2, so you now know that the man who was decapitated in New York was not the real Magneto, but an imposter.

Dear Sword Strokes,

All in all, I found the debut issue of this exciting new series quite entertaining. Chris Claremont managed to establish the setting—the ruins of Genosha—and the character of Professor Xavier quite well, but there's still precious little to indicate in what overall direction this series will be heading.

The unusual thing is that we're starting out with just one character, Professor X, rather than a full team of characters, and from there we get to watch as the cast grows with the progressing storyline. That truly is the markings of a fresh start—not just for Professor Xavier, but for the readers as well. There's something about this book that gives me a feeling of being in on the ground floor of something potentially huge. Whatever Claremont has in store, I'm in for the ride.

Naturally, the high point of the issue was seeing the one, true? Magneto alive and well at the end of the issue. This development sure managed to stay a well-kept secret until it was sprung on us, and I, for one, am jumping with excitement for the next issue. I can hardly wait to find out how this is possible.

Another thing that intrigued me was Xavier's speculation that something—or someone?—provoked the surge in mutants' percentage of the human population. I am also excited to see where this might go.

Last, but not least, some praise for the artwork. Aaron Lopresti shows a lot of promise and is a good choice as the artist of this series. Please keep him on it for as long as possible.

Michael C.T. Andersen
Denmark

Michael, you're certainly right to think you're in on something huge here....we can't go into too much detail, but suffice it to say EXCALIBUR is going to be ground zero for some major happenings in the X-universe in upcoming issues, so don't go anywhere.

Dear Sword Strokes,

I'm reeling over EXCALIBUR #1!

I always imagined a title that would solely focus on Professor X...the character has developed such an immense depth over the years that it was inevitable fans would eventually see him spin off into his own series, but Marvel has outdone itself with the spectacular final page! Was Magneto's death completely staged, and to what ends? I'm very excited by the potential storylines that have opened up.

Is Professor X looking to re-establish a new School for Gifted Youngsters on Genosha? With the X-Men off taking care of business in their other titles, perhaps the time has come for Charles Xavier to revisit his dream and jump-start it. I'm thrilled to see Chris Claremont at the reins of this project and the artwork by Aaron Lopresti is wonderful! Among the new X-Men: Reload titles, EXCALIBUR stands alone—and I can't wait to see what comes next!

JC Alvarez
New York City

While we wouldn't say it's Professor X's plan to open a new School for Gifted Youngsters on Genosha, it's certainly true that his goals are educational. On the one hand, he's here to mentor young mutants like Wicked and Freakshow, but he's also here to teach the people of Genosha how to build a society—how to coexist peacefully and be self-sufficient. So in a sense, the whole island is his School.

That's it for this month! See you in thirty!

JULY 2004 X-MEN TITLES

UNCANNY X-MEN 446: Here comes The Fury! By Claremont and Davis!

STARJAMMERS 1 & 2: New ongoing series, first two issues in one month! By Kevin J. Anderson, Alé Garza and Jorge Lucas.

EXILES 49: The Impossible Man! 'Nuff Said! By Bedard and Calafiore.

ALPHA FLIGHT 5: Alpha Flight vs. Alpha Flight?! By Lobdell and Henry.

DISTRICT X 3: Bishop gets closer to Mr. M, by Hine and Yardin.

EMMA FROST 13: New story arc! Emma goes to college, by Bollers and guest-artist Adriana Melo.

X-MEN 159: How do you solve a problem like Xorn? Austen and Larroca try to find out.

NEW X-MEN: ACADEMY X 3: The New Mutants vs. the Hellions! By DeFilippis & Weir and guest-artist Staz Johnson.

WEAPON X 26: New story arc spotlighting SABRETOOTH! By Tieri and Mandrake.

ASTONISHING X-MEN 3: The Beast's moment of truth! By Whedon and Cassaday.

EXCALIBUR 3: Enter the Omega Sentinel! By Claremont and Lopresti.

MYSTIQUE 17: Is Mystique M.I.A.? Or A.W.O.L.? By McKeever and Garcia.

ROGUE 1: Catch the first issue of the Southern Belle's new ongoing series, by Rob Rodi and Cliff Richards!

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NEXT ISSUE:
THE
MAGISTRATES
ATTACK!

Alternative Comics needs your help!

Dear Comics Fans:

I'm Jeff Mason making a direct appeal to you, our faithful readers, in a time of serious financial difficulty. If you could find a way to buy some of our books listed below, you would greatly help in our time of financial crisis.

Please check off the books you want below and then buy these books from your favorite retailer. You can also use the checklist in the back of your copy of *Alternative Comics #2* that was given out by your local comic book store on Free Comic Book Day.

Alternative Comics is suffering some very dire cash flow problems and I am turning to you for help. In the spring of 2002 our book trade distributor, LPC, filed Chapter 11 bankruptcy owing Alternative Comics a lot of money. I had hoped that I could weather the storm by taking money from my savings and by borrowing on credit until receiving the agreed-upon 42% of what LPC owed us. Now over two years later, LPC is still in bankruptcy proceedings and I am completely out of savings and credit.

In the past (prior to LPC) I had ample working capital - I had great credit terms with my various printers. Now (post LPC) I have absolutely no working capital and must pay up front to print every book.

For each publication, I now wait for all of the retailer advance orders to come in to Diamond, then I contract Diamond to assign the payment they'd pay to me to my printer to print the book. This contractual agreement costs money and cuts into our razor thin margin. Lack of cash on hand has also caused me to have to shrink print runs on some books. This increases the cost per unit of each book, and speeds the looming reprint costs. I've been increasing my publishing schedule over the last two years, and in hindsight, I expanded too quickly. Alternative Comics is moving forward with a much more reasonable, much more foresighted publishing schedule, with some really amazing projects in the works!

Alternative Comics' cash flow problems have been the only reason for not yet reprinting *Bipolar #1* and *Humor Can Be Funny* as well as having been the only reason a number of books have been arriving late or re-solicited. I am asking you to please buy Alternative Comics books from your local retailers. In my fanciful imagination, the best result would be for retailers to quickly sell out of all Alternative Comics books in inventory to customers and hurriedly place nice reorders with distributors.

Alternative Comics has no staff other than myself, so I am unable to handle orders directly. I ask that readers buy from your local comic book retailers, and retailers to buy from your favorite distributors.

Jeff Mason - Publisher
Alternative Comics

Web: <http://www.indyworld.com/altcomics>
Forum: <http://www.talkaboutcomics.com/index2.php?c=28#alt>

(You bastards read this book for free, so why not help this guy out?)



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